

ACTION

Memo No. 916-78

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

September 26, 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR CHRISTINE DODSON

FROM: Denis Clift /9/
SUBJECT: Proposed Meeting with Member of
Argentine Junta, Admiral Massera

It has been recommended to the Vice President by a private individual that the Vice President agree to meet with Admiral Massera when the latter is in the U.S. October 9-11. Given the current state of play of US-Argentine relations, I have questions about this recommendation. I would greatly appreciate a State-NSC recommendation on this proposal.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

October 5, 1978

*file: Argentina*MEMORANDUM FOR DR. ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Request for Appointment with Vice President
Mondale by Emilio Massera, Military Junta
Argentina.

On September 26, a private individual recommended to Vice President Mondale that he meet with Admiral Emilio Massera of the Argentine Military Junta who is visiting the United States October 9-11.

Earlier on September 15, his last day as the Navy member of the Argentine Military Junta, Admiral Massera had written President Carter concerning relations between Argentina and the U.S., and requested a meeting with the President. Our recommendation on the latter is attached.

Our recommendation on a presidential appointment, and the reason for it, are fully applicable to the Vice President as well. Our Ambassador specifically recommended that Admiral Massera not be received by the President, Vice President, or Secretary of State.

As indicated in our earlier memorandum, we believe that it would be appropriate for Admiral Massera to meet with Robert Pastor of the NSC staff and Assistant Secretary Vaky.

Jack Perry for
Peter Tarnoff
Executive Secretary

Attachment:

Tarnoff/Brzezinski Memorandum of October 2, 1978.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 10, 1978

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Dear Admiral Massera:

I have been asked to respond to your September 15 letter to President Carter concerning relations between our two countries.

As you suggest, there is a need for continuing dialogue between Argentina and the United States so that the problems which exist can be discussed and resolved.

We are hopeful that the conversations held between President Videla and Vice President Mondale will lead to actions which will make it possible to bring about closer cooperation and better understanding between our two countries.

Like you, we believe that it is essential for all countries to work toward a world in which the dignity of all is acknowledged and observed.

President Carter's schedule is very filled in the next few months, but I would be pleased to have an opportunity to talk with you when you visit Washington. Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Viron Vaky has also expressed a desire to meet with you during your stay here.

With my best regards.

Sincerely,


David Aaron
Deputy Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

Admiral Emilio Massera
Military Junta
Argentina, Buenos Aires

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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CONFIDENTIAL/GDS

October 6, 1978

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MEMORANDUM FOR DENIS CLIFT

FROM: Christine Dodson *Christine*
SUBJECT: Admiral Massera

The NSC staff concurs with the attached State Department recommendation against a Vice Presidential meeting with Admiral Massera.

CONFIDENTIAL ATTACHMENTS

~~Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP~~

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MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

~~CONFIDENTIAL/GDS~~

October 5, 1978

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MEMORANDUM FOR: ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI
 DAVID AARON

FROM: ROBERT PASTOR *Bob*

SUBJECT: Letter from Admiral Massera

On September 15, his last day as the Navy representative of the Argentine Junta, Admiral Massera wrote the President a letter on US-Argentine relations, and requested a meeting (Tab A). In State's memo (attached at Tab B), they described Massera as a "talented opportunist," which is the way that virtually everyone describes him. His letter reflects both his talent and his willingness to compliment in a manner which does not suggest complete candor. When he was in charge, the Navy was known to have a number of para-military organizations, which engaged in acts of terrorism which Videla could not always control. Yet he writes to the President: "I realize that it is difficult to conduct a generous human rights campaign in the world without occasionally bruising the sensibilities of one's own friends."

Videla has told our Ambassador that he would not favor a meeting between Massera and the President, and our Ambassador has personally recommended against such a meeting, as does the State Department. In fact, they recommend that Vaky or I see Massera on behalf of the President. They have also attached a letter for me to sign in response to Massera's letter. I would, of course, see Massera, but frankly, I don't think that is appropriate. A recent cable indicates that Massera will be seeing President Perez in Venezuela, and President Guzman in the Dominican Republic before he comes to the U.S.

RECOMMENDATION:

I recommend that David Aaron sign the letter attached at Tab I, and he and I see Massera.

That David sign the letter at Tab I.

Approve _____

Disapprove _____

~~Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP~~

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SUSPENSE

Add/m 5738

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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Washington, D.C. 20520

Action w/Pastor

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

October 2, 1978 *18C*

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI
THE WHITE HOUSE

SUBJECT: Letter to President Carter from Admiral Emilio Massera, Military Junta, Argentina

On September 15, his last day as the Navy member of the Argentine Military Junta, Admiral Emilio Massera wrote President Carter concerning relations between Argentina and the U.S., and requested a meeting with the President.

The Admiral has now retired from military service and is trying to build a political base in Argentina. A talented opportunist, Massera will soon travel to Europe and the United States in an attempt to gain international recognition to further his domestic ends. Massera is viewed with suspicion and some hostility by the Argentine Army, which is the dominant partner in the Junta. Our Ambassador in Buenos Aires has been told that Argentine President Videla and the Army would not favor a meeting between Admiral Massera and President Carter. The Ambassador has personally recommended against such a meeting, suggesting instead that Massera speak with a lower ranking U.S. official. The Department agrees with this view; we do not want to antagonize the Army by arranging a meeting between Massera and President Carter, but we do believe that Massera should meet with appropriately high-level U.S. officials.

We believe that it would be appropriate for Admiral Massera to meet with Robert Pastor of the NSC staff and Assistant Secretary Vaky.

Jack Penn for
Peter Tarnoff
Executive Secretary

Attachment:

Suggested Draft Reply

~~Department of State, A/GIS/PS/SRP~~

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Admiral Emilio Massera,
Military Junta,
Argentina, Buenos Aires

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Dear Admiral Massera:

I have been asked to respond to your September 15 letter to President Carter concerning relations between our two countries.

As you suggest, there is a need for continuing dialogue between Argentina and the United States so that the problems which exist can be discussed and resolved.

We are hopeful that the conversations held between President Videla and Vice President Mondale will lead to actions which will make it possible to bring about closer cooperation and better understanding between our two countries.

Like you, we believe that it is essential for all countries to work toward a world in which the dignity of all is acknowledged and observed.

President Carter's schedule is very filled in the next few months but I would be pleased to have an opportunity to talk with you when you visit Washington. Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Viron Vaky has also expressed a desire to meet with you during your stay here.

With my best regards.

Sincerely

~~Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP~~

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Junta Militar
Comandante en Jefe de la Armada

BUENOS AIRES, 15 de setiembre de 1978.

RE

Excelentísimo señor Presidente de los Estados Unidos de América
Dn. JAMES EARL CARTER
WASHINGTON - ESTADOS UNIDOS DE AMERICA

Señor Presidente:

Al cesar en mis funciones como miembro de la Junta Militar de la República Argentina, he creído conveniente dirigirme a usted para hacerle participé de algunas reflexiones sobre la situación de mi país.

Así como los argentinos tenemos dificultades para comprender en plenitud las acciones de la política norteamericana, de la misma manera debemos admitir que por parte de su gobierno deben existir similares inconvenientes para visualizar los reales problemas que nos aquejan a los argentinos.

Ello, como es lógico, produce diferentes enfoques de un país con respecto a otro. Pero es deber de los gobernantes visualizar cuál es la verdadera intención con que se llevan a la práctica esas interpretaciones diferentes, con el objeto de adecuar el accionar propio a los mejores intereses nacionales.

En tal sentido, me siento obligado a manifestar que, aún cuando personalmente he llegado a disentir con algunos aspectos de la política exterior de su gobierno con respecto al mío, jamás abrigué la menor duda de que sus pasos estaban inspirados por un noble y genuino interés por el bienestar de la República Argentina, en el contexto global de las naciones que tradicionalmente han sentido y actuado como integrantes del mundo occidental.

En mis frecuentes visitas a todos los países sudamericanos, he hecho especial hincapié en la necesidad de emprender la reconquista del espíritu de Occidente por parte de todos los países americanos, como único camino para salvaguardar nuestra identidad continental. Es así que he enfatizado hasta el cansancio que a Occidente no hay que buscarlo en el mapa, porque es hoy una actitud del alma que no está atada a ninguna geografía. Occidente es el hombre protagonizando la dignidad esencial de la vida. Occidente es la libertad de pensar y de hacer. Occidente es el respeto al honor, al trabajo, al talento. Pero Occidente es también el amor, es la esperanza, y es la misericordia.

Esta insistencia en sacar a la luz ese espíritu dormido de nuestros pueblos, ha sido acogido siempre con beneplácito. Resulta extraño entonces comprobar que, paradójicamente, el tema central de las presentes divergencias argentino-norteamericanas sea el mismo que nos ofrece la mayor posibilidad de una comprensión total entre nosotros.

Comprendo que existen dificultades para promover una generosa campaña de promoción de los derechos humanos en el mundo, que no roce en algunos aspectos la sensibilidad de los propios amigos. Pretender que esto no ocurriría sería casi utópico y falso de realismo político. Yo mismo he sentido la incomprendición de los esfuerzos por promover dentro de mi propio país un cambio de outlook.

Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP

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Junta Militar
Comandante en Jefe de la Armada

.../12.

Es por tal razón que interpreto debidamente -y en tal convencimiento se la agradezco- la generosa mención que usted hizo el 27 de enero, ante un grupo de periodistas de la Nueva Inglaterra reunidos en la Casa Blanca, sobre nuestro rol en la cuestión de los derechos humanos.

Esa actitud nuestra que mereciera tal mención suya, es firme y decidida. Puede usted tener la certeza de que no habrá desviación de ese propósito bajo la Comandancia de mi sucesor, el Almirante Armando Lambruschini.

Señor Presidente: al despedirme de usted como miembro del máximo órgano de poder de la República Argentina, lo hago persuadido de que debo seguir bregando -desde el llano- por la consecución de los objetivos que se propusieron las Fuerzas Armadas al hacerse cargo del poder. Como he manifestado recientemente ante la IX Conferencia Naval Interamericana, las ideas no pasan a retiro. Yo puedo asegurarle que las mías no lo harán y que por tal razón seguiré bregando para restablecer a breve plazo la estructura institucional de mi país.

Mis recientes conversaciones en Caracas con el Presidente Carlos Andrés Pérez y con los ex-Presidentes Betancourt, Caldera, Sanabria y Larrazábal, han robustecido mi convencimiento sobre las posibilidades del afianzamiento democrático en la América Latina.

Espero que en los próximos meses, oportunidad en que tengo planeado "a brief sentimental return to Washington" en donde viví por dos años en la década del 60, pueda tener la ocasión de conversar personalmente con usted sobre la evolución de la situación argentina.

Sinceramente.



Military Junta
Chief of Naval Operations

Buenos Aires, September 15, 1978

His Excellency
James Earl Carter,
President of the United States of America,
Washington, D.C.

Mr. President:

Now that I have ceased to be a member of the Military Junta of the Argentine Republic, I should like to share with you some thoughts about the situation in my country.

Just as we Argentines have difficulty in fully understanding United States policy actions, your Government must, of course, have similar trouble in visualizing the real problems that confront Argentina. The natural result is that differences in points of view develop between the two countries. But it is the duty of those in power to seek to understand the true intentions with which those differing interpretations are put into practice, in order that they may make their own actions consistent with their countries' best interests.

In that connection I feel impelled to state that, even though I have personally disagreed with some aspects of your Government's foreign policy with respect to mine, I never harbored the slightest

doubt that your course was inspired by a noble and genuine interest in the well-being of the Argentine Republic as one of the nations that have traditionally felt and acted as members of the Western world.

On my frequent visits to all the South American countries, I have laid special emphasis on the need for all the American countries to recapture the Western spirit as the only way to safeguard our continental identity. I have thus repeatedly stressed that the West is not to be sought on the map, because today it is a spiritual attitude independent of geography. The West is mankind acting out the essential dignity of life. The West is freedom of thought and action. The West is respect for honor, work, talent. But the West is also love, hope, and compassion.

This insistence on bringing to light that sleeping spirit of our peoples has always been favorably received. It is therefore strange to note that, paradoxically, the central theme of current U.S.-Argentine differences is the very one that offers us the greatest potential for complete mutual understanding.

I realize that it is difficult to conduct a generous human rights campaign in the world without occasionally bruising the sensibilities of one's own friends. To pretend otherwise would be almost Utopian and politically unrealistic. I myself have felt the lack of understanding for efforts to promote a change in outlook within my own country.

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